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Canada's New Government invests more than $5.4 million in Ontario to encourage seniors to actively participate in their communities

WELLAND, ONTARIO, March 5, 2007 — The Honourable Marjory LeBreton, Leader of the Government in the Senate and Secretary of State (Seniors), on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, today announced $5,441,693 in funding for 250 seniors projects in Ontario. Funding was provided by the Government's New Horizons for Seniors Program.

The Secretary of State (Seniors) made the announcement at the United Way of South Niagara, which is receiving $24,390 through the program. The *Niagara Legacy Leaders* project is geared towards Welland-area seniors and aims to develop a corps of trained leaders to take on leadership or mentoring roles in the voluntary sector over the course of the year. This will allow local seniors to contribute their knowledge, experience and leadership for the long-term benefit of the community.

"Canada's New Government has listened to seniors across Canada express an interest in becoming more active and making long-lasting differences in their communities," said Minister LeBreton. "In response, we are proud to invest in these New Horizons for Seniors projects and ensure seniors can contribute to community life in ways they feel will make a difference."

This announcement follows two national announcements made earlier today by Ministers LeBreton and Solberg in St. Catharines. Minister Solberg confirmed national funding of almost $14 million for 775 New Horizons for Seniors Program projects across Canada, while Minister LeBreton announced the creation of a National Seniors Council.

The National Seniors Council will advise the federal government on issues of national importance to seniors. The Council will help ensure that government policies, programs, and services meet the evolving needs of seniors.

The New Horizons for Seniors Program provides grants to support a range of community-based projects across Canada that encourage seniors to contribute to their communities through social participation and active living. Projects support broad national objectives and regional priorities.

In just one year, Canada's New Government has been making a difference to make significant improvements to the lives of seniors:

- creating the position of Secretary of State (Seniors);
- providing tax relief by allowing pension income splitting for pensioners, beginning in the 2007 tax year;
- providing tax relief by increasing the age credit by $1,000 (from $4,066 to $5,066), effective in the 2006 tax year;
- providing tax relief by increasing the maximum amount of eligible pension income that can be claimed under the pension income credit to $2000 from $1,000, putting almost $900 million back in the hands of seniors over the next two years and removing 85,000 pensioners from the tax rolls;

- increasing the Guaranteed Income Supplement maximum benefit, benefiting more than 50,000 seniors, and proposing legislation to make it easier for seniors to apply for and receive the Supplement;
- increasing the Refundable Medical Expense Supplement tax credit by more than 30 per cent to $1000;
- expanding the Compassionate Care Benefit, making more Canadians eligible; and
- introducing a targeted Initiative for older workers

For more information on the New Horizons for Seniors Program, visit www.hrsdc.gc.ca.

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A list of projects is included in the attached backgrounder.

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backgrounder
New Horizons for Seniors Program

The New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) provides funding to support a range of community-based projects across Canada that encourage seniors to contribute to their communities through social participation and active living. By focusing on the important role of seniors in Canada's communities, the program also gives seniors more opportunity to share their wealth of knowledge and help others.

The New Horizons for Seniors Program was launched in 2004 and has proven to be popular, funding 1,700 projects across Canada in just three years. Due to project successes, the program's budget will be almost $20 million in 2007.

Funded projects are inspired, implemented, and led by seniors; they support broad national objectives and regional priorities set by Review Committees in each province. Review Committees consist of members who are active in seniors' and community issues and include representation from the federal and provincial or territorial governments. The committees also review and recommend proposals for funding. Individual proposals are eligible for up to $25,000 in funding, and the maximum length of a project is one year.

Seven hundred and seventy-five projects were approved for funding or nearly $14 million.

For more information, please consult: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/isp/horizons/toc.shtml.

All times are reflected in Atlantic time
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